A chat about America, October and November 1884

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OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER, 1884.

J. P.

(Thiefly extracted from Letters written Home.)

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A CHAT ABOUT AMERICA.

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THE trip by steamer from Liverpool to the United States or Canada is so often undertaken that most travellers take no notice of it when relating their experience, or content themselves with the remark that one voyage is just like another. I think nothing is further from the reality than this latter statement. I believe that every voyage has distinctive

features, and every one is distinguished by special characteristics from those that have gone before, and differs just as one face differs from another.

I feel certain that a student of men and manners, gifted with a ready pen and free from sea-sickness, might spend years travelling from Liverpool to New York and back and produce a goodly volume every month, replete with humour and scandal, and affording an insight into every society such as on shore few have a chance of getting in a B 2 lifetime. Politics, arts and sciences, music and the drama, religion, the press, the House of Lords, the House of Commons, are often well represented; whilst speculators in land and mines and adventurers of every description are on board, together with merchants from Japan and New Zealand—the whole forming a gathering of a unique and remarkable character.

One thing has often struck me about a sea-voyage, and that is that the acquaintances made are usually formed on the first day, and that people who do not speak then, or at any rate on the day following, do not take much trouble to acknowledge each other afterwards, or, if acquaintance is made, it is of the slightest description.

I said that every voyage has its distinctive character. Not only are the passengers' names different, but their characters are different, the ship is different, the captain is different, and the elements themselves are always different. The sea is, as we all know, proverbially inconstant, but the rough sea of one North Atlantic voyage in no way resembles the rough sea of the next, and the calm day that *possibly* may be met with on the voyage out has no resemblance to the calm day that can hardly, as a coincidence, be hoped for on the passage home.

These thoughts struck me thirteen years ago when visiting North America for the first time, and I had them again impressed on my mind in making a second voyage to the same continent last October. I made both voyages, out and home, by the Cunard line, but I am inclined to think that the variety even extends to the 3 particular line of steamers one travels by, and that a traveller who has had experience of the different lines, could tell at

once which he was on from the first look of the surroundings on board, and before he had seen the distinctive colouring of the ship's funnel.

There seems to be a distinctive feature peculiar to each service, each ship, and each captain. There is perhaps more uniformity about the weather than about anything else, the uniformity in the weather consisting in the fact that in the North Atlantic the weather is always bad—at least, that has always been my experience, more or less; but, then, there are degrees of badness as well as degrees of goodness, and as long as ice is avoided, the traveller need not to be at all afraid of the strength of the waves or of the winds if he is on board of one of the fine ships that belong to one or other of the great companies whose steamers start from Liverpool. The discipline on board these steamers is very perfect; officers and crew seem to understand each other, and to be animated, under all circumstances, with an honest desire to do their duty.

Our party consisted of Mr. J. A. B., Mr. R. B., my elder son, and myself, and we said good-bye to our domestic circle at home before starting from Manchester. I can assure any friend who, similarly placed, intends to make a voyage of some duration, that home is the best place to say good-bye from. It is mistaken kindness for those dear to one to go down to be in the way at Liverpool, and to have their sense of loneliness 4 aggravated by the lonely return journey in the train. Wives, sisters, and children must be in the way on a crowded ship; luggage is in confusion, and *must* be looked after; and the passengers are in each other's way, each one looking after his berth, looking after his seat at table, and wondering whom he is to sit beside. For a certainty selfishness in one form or other shows itself in a general idea that it is the proper thing to do to look after oneself and one's future comfort for ten days or so, and this to such a degree that the traveller can hardly do justice to accompanying friends, so soon to return to their desolate dwellings. Husbands or lovers, fathers or brothers, ought to leave those dear to them on the domestic hearth. The bustle and novelty of everything distracts the traveller from overpowering grief, whilst the loved ones at home can be best employed in praying for their dear ones' safety and speedy return. This was happily our experience. The bustle attending the transfer of baggage

from pier to tender and from tender to ship was considerable. But the end comes at last; bell after bell is sounded, and finally, the screw beginning to revolve, hurried farewells are taken, the unaccompanied passengers look stoical and unconcerned, the tender falls astern, a few cheers are heard, and, very soon after, the gong sounds and dinner is on the table!

Soon after starting, by which time the ship's printer has got his press going, each passenger has a list handed to him of those on board, and, if sickness has not got the upper hand, a very interesting document it is. No morning 5 paper in war-time is more eagerly scrutinized. “Who is Who?” is a very interesting book, and tells of the “upper ten thousand” in Great Britain; but the leaflet of two pages handed about on the “Bothnia” was, I dare say, more eagerly scanned than ever it was. At first the list is very much of a blank, but soon one finds out a good number of the names, and the passengers who are of an inquiring nature add to their knowledge every day during the voyage. One hears some such remark as this, four or five days after starting: “Do you see that gentleman with the wig and the gold glasses? I thought he was a professor, and he turns out to be a Chicago pork merchant.” A gentleman said to be a farmer from the Midland Counties turned out to be a Scotchman who had been manufacturing goods in the States for many years; a yachtsman, *judging from his rig* , turned out to be a London banker; a gentleman with a Portuguese name proved to be an English officer on leave from Egypt; and a gentleman generally believed to be a German lawyer, and who was known as “Mr. Four-o'clock,” from his habit of early rising, turned out to be a wood merchant from Bavaria. On a previous voyage, a gentleman well known in Manchester as a merchant and a vendor of China shirtings, and whom I have known in different capacities, went out in a capacity I was not, knowing his versatility, surprised at. He was going to Colorado to bring to bear the knowledge he had acquired in Mosley Street and the Exchange on the value of a silver mine—the “Shell Creek!” A mine under such 6 auspices could hardly be expected to be a success, and I believe not even the prospectus was issued, notwithstanding the sanguine report of our fellow-traveller.

Our table consisted of Dr. M. Dix, of Trinity Church, New York, a church of pre-revolution fame; his wife and relatives; a London banker; two young ladies returning to the States; a New York merchant and his two daughters, conspicuous by their absence until our arrival in New York harbour; my son, equally conspicuous from the same cause; the other members of our party; and our captain—Captain Roberts—a typical seaman, kindly, humorous, and reverential. To travel with such a one in command puts one completely at ease, and inspires the comfortable feeling that all is being done that can be done to ensure the ship's safety. A home-like feeling soon spread over our table, and without demonstration of any kind a kindly interest was engendered in each and all which, I believe, will remain for many years.

During our voyage I wrote home every day, and in reading over my letters on my return I find such sentences as the following:—“The weather improved after we left Queenstown, and I walked the deck so persistently that I slept soundly from sheer fatigue. John has not been at table yet.” . . . “I find writing is not very easy, as the “guards” are on the table and I cannot get my arms properly in position for writing.” . . . “We had a bad day yesterday. The sea was a head one, and the wind was very high. Walking was impossible, and I left the deck early in the afternoon. Immediately after 7 I left, a heavy sea came on board, and those on deck got doused. As the evening advanced the-weather got worse, and soon after dinner-time we entered a gale. During the night the ship laboured a good deal, and the engines had to be slowed in consequence of the screw not getting hold of the water. Our run for the twenty-four hours was only 239 miles. Since noon the weather has improved steadily, but the roll of the sea is still considerable, and we pitch and roll continually.”

This rolling motion has to be witnessed to be realized. It is not felt only after a storm or in stormy weather. I have felt it in apparently smooth water, and it is owing doubtless to the heavy Atlantic swell which in mid-ocean, or in the narrowing space of the rolling forties, finds a suitable field for display. I see that Mrs. Brassey, in her last book, speaks of the

“roaring forties;” perhaps both roaring and rolling are appropriate adjectives for these latitudes.

In another letter, written when half-way across, I note that the rolling is probably caused by the action of the Gulf Stream. At that time we were close to the banks of Newfoundland. At dinner-time the rolling was so bad that three or four hundred plates were smashed, and I remark that the motion would have been alarming to any one who did not know what a ship *could do* in this way without capsizing. As the night advanced the rolling increased, and a vis(it I made to the deck convinced me that I was better in the cabin, as it was dangerous to attempt to walk the slippery deck.

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Next day the sea was changed most markedly for the better, and the spirits of the passengers rose accordingly. When on deck, just after breakfast, we saw what looked like a jet of steam or spray about eighty yards from the ship, and in half a minute later the back of a whale rose for about a minute from the sea. Perhaps about thirty feet of its length and six or seven feet of its height was visible out of the water, and excepting for the jet of spray the whale might have passed for a long log of wood. On returning homewards we would have run into the *carcase* of a dead whale had not the “look-out” detected it in time to allow of the ship's course being altered.

A Sunday at sea can be as well spent as on land, and the service, when the weather allows of it being held, is always, in my opinion, particularly impressive. Our captain, Captain Roberts, as fine a specimen of a British sailor as can be found anywhere, read the prayers. The crew, or as many of them as could be spared, were in the centre of the cabin, and the bulk of the. passengers on either side formed a congregation which in earnestness and devotion could not have been matched in St. Paul's in London or in St. Peter's in Rome. Our *vis(-à-vis(* at table, Dr. Morgan Dix, gave a short and very appropriate address afterwards, and a liberal collection was taken up for the Sailors' Orphan Home in Liverpool. The Cunard Company have a prayer-book of their own; it is almost identical with the

Church of England Prayer-Book, but the arrangement is somewhat simplified. One 9 or two prayers are inserted from the Scotch Church Collection, and the President of the United States is prayed for specially in the same way as is the Queen of England.

Among our passengers was an old man—probably of threescore years and ten—with a long beard and a most unmistakable Lancashire accent. He was dressed in very good workman's clothes, and I thought when I first saw him that he was an overlooker in a mill. He was at a table situated some distance from ours, so I did not make his acquaintance at first, and afterwards only from curiosity, as I found those sitting near him had dubbed him “The Prophet.” His cabin companion, as fate had willed it, was a very profane and irreverent young man—a kind of “ne'er-do-weel”—and he led the “Prophet” an awful life. What between “drawing him out” and playing practical jokes on him, he made the old man's life rather a burden. The “Prophet” turned out to be the emissary of a sect whose belief is that death is caused by the absence of faith, and he was going on a trip round the world to proclaim the glad tidings. His “stable” companion, as he called himself, pretended to believe in his mission, probably to make amends for the practical jokes he had played on him, and organized a Special Service on the Monday afternoon; got hymns printed; had a collection; and by his over-zeal managed, as he intended from the first, to turn the whole into ridicule.

I would just like to warn travellers to America to be careful as to unofficial collections on board ship. There 10 are very often people on board whose philanthropy is too ardent to be disinterested, and it does not always follow that donations given to irresponsible passengers reach the person for whom they are intended.

In contradistinction to the “Prophet” of threescore and ten, there was a little child of about three or four years of age, who came wandering into our berths at all hours. No parent or guardian ever appeared, and the child could give no account of herself. A friend suggested that the child's mother was too sick to attend to her, and wondered that no ticket was on the child's breast. On a previous voyage our friend had seen a child of the same age, with

a ticket bearing the inscription—“ *Please to feed this child* .” The mother was so ill that she could do nothing for the poor infant, and adopted this mode of vicariously looking after its creature comforts. The result was that the child got more food than was really good for it.

My next neighbour at table was a German, resident in New York and a naturalized American. He had been travelling in Europe with his three daughters and a parrot. He had a little of the tendency to exaggeration in which Americans sometimes indulge, often, I believe, for the fun of the thing. He said he always took a full first-class ticket for the parrot, and took care to put the cage always on the seat next the window, so that the parrot could see the country.

A concert was a great success, both going out and returning, and a trip of ten days more would, on each 11 occasion, have doubtless developed an amount of talent no one could have suspected to be on board.

The one great excitement of the voyage out is perhaps the taking on board the pilot. The pilots run out in yacht-like vessels for some hundreds of miles to meet the approaching steamers, and a weary time they must have of it, waiting perhaps for days the advent of a ship requiring their aid. When he comes on board, the pilot is scrutinized with wonderful interest, and as he usually has with him newspapers only two or three days old, the passengers devour the news he brings, as it is probably a week later than what they are in possession of. According to my experience, the pilot is a most disappointing individual. My fancy painted him, before I saw one, as a jolly tar, dressed in conventional nautical costume. The reality has repeatedly turned out to be a thin man with black cloth clothes and an ordinary hat—in fact, rather resembling the conventional idea of a working tailor than that of a sailor. I think I have read the same experience somewhere in print, so it *must* be true.

We felt so much attached to our old ship that it was really with regret that we parted from her, and I feel that I have shown this in what I have written, and that I have tarried rather

unduly over our experiences on board, but the trouble with me has been to curtail my remarks rather than to extend them.

Soon after passing Sandy Hook we were at anchor, with New York distant some few miles before us, with Staten Island on our left and Coney Island on our right, 12 three-masted cutters passing us in full sail, and American three-deck steamers on every side with, to most of us, unaccustomed machinery. We were transferred to a tender, and shortly afterwards found ourselves, with our luggage, in the Custom-house of New York, whence we were “cleared” after no more unnecessary delay than, when returning, we experienced at Liverpool. To show that we “knew our way about,” we, in regular American fashion, handed our trunks to a “checker” and stepped from the Customs wharf into the open street on as fine and clear an autumn day as could possibly be imagined.

A car-driver got sight of us as we left the Customs buildings, and invited us to take his conveyance. I replied, as I would have done at home, “No, thank you.” The driver replied in a moment, and with half a smile, “I don't want your thanks; I want your dollars and cents.” This was said the very second we left the Custom-house, and it seems to me, after mature consideration, that this car-driver's speech was a key to a good deal of American character—“I don't want sentiment; I want dollars.” In America everything is very matter-of-fact, and poetry seems to enter very little into every-day life. An example of this feeling is sometimes exhibited in a commendable way. In the case of an accident to a workman, in which the feelings of his fellows are sympathetically excited, a collector goes round to each sympathizer and asks, “How much are you sorry” the response being *so many* dollars. In America, “Thank you” seems not to be said as a rule. 13 Not from impoliteness, but from the feeling that it is unnecessary. The car-driver seemed to be a very decent man, and doubtless would have been as truly grateful for service rendered as would any one else; but “Thank you” did not put one cent into his pocket, and he therefore considered it a piece of verbiage. I often felt that I missed the “Thank you” we English drop at every turn; the expression adds a little poetry to our every-day life, even if it does no actual good. I remember, when a boy, a great linguist, still amongst us in Manchester, saying

that there was no phrase in any language—and he could teach a dozen—so expressive and so kindly as “ *God bless you* ” pronounced with a Lancashire accent; and I think the Americans would lose none of their liberties if they interlarded their conversation a little more with such expressions as “I thank you” and “I beg your pardon.” “God bless you” would indicate less hardness of heart than does the reverse—too often let fall from lips in America and at home.

We landed at New York on the 22nd October. The weather was magnificent—like the best weather in September here. We had our warm steamer clothes on and felt them oppressive, especially as, after eleven days on board the steamer and the novelty of everything, we were inclined to do too much at once.

A few yards from the steamer's landing-stage there was a station of the Elevated Railway which, in a general way, runs round the island of New York, and is now one of its chief, and perhaps its most striking institution. 14 It is not, like the Metropolitan Railway in London, an underground railway, but the very reverse, being carried as much above the streets as the other is below them. The Metropolitan is carried through tunnels of solid brick; the Elevated Railway is carried on the top of trellis-work of a slight description, supported by iron pillars at intervals. The carriages are like tramcars here, and more than twice as long. The first idea you feel is that the whole affair will collapse, but as train after train goes on in rapid succession, with numerous carriages crowded to the door, idea of danger disappears from one's head; and I believe this confidence is well warranted, no accident traceable to the construction of the railway having ever occurred. When it does occur—Heaven help the poor passengers!—the crash will be awful.

There are stations every half-mile or so, and we were soon seated in the train running north to Twenty-third Street Station, the station adjoining the hotel we intended putting up at, viz., the *Fifth Avenue Hotel* . The Elevated Railway ran through second-class streets, and though, being on the level with the first story or even the second story of the houses seemed strange to us, we, in a few journeys, got quite accustomed to the scene, and

the passengers and the dwellers along the route seemed in no way inconvenienced by being overlooked; indeed, the property in the streets so utilized is said to have been rather improved by the trains than otherwise.

The line of route is of course well utilized for advertising purposes. Many of the houses are let off in flats, 15 and the first or second floor people are no more incommoded than are our occupants of ground-floor houses by passing “trams.” The continuously passing cars seem to bring traffic to the streets that otherwise would never have reached them, and the rapidity of the motion of the train between the stations makes the journey a very quick one, when compared with the competing “trams” liable to be pulled up at every street-corner. From what we saw of them during the seven days we spent in New York, on our arrival and previous to our departure for home, our party came unanimously to the conclusion that New York would be robbed of its greatest convenience were these elevated railroads abolished. The uniform charge on the Elevated Railroad was ten cents—dear for a short distance compared with our fares here, but very cheap for longer distances.

By this railway, then, we were landed near our hotel—the Fifth Avenue. Twelve or fifteen years ago this hotel was considered to be the most noted one in New York on what is known as the American system, viz., an inclusive charge per day for bed and board. The opposite plan is called the European one, and according to it you are charged for each dish you order, as in Paris. The almost universal system in America is to pay so much per day, and for this charge the guest is entitled to all the privileges of the house—to meals at any time and to everything excepting to wine and spirits. We were determined in the choice of our hotel mainly by the fact that we were arriving in the very heat 16 of the contest for the American Presidency; and knowing that the Fifth Avenue Hotel was the head-quarters of the leading wire-pullers of the Republican party, we thought by going there we would have a good opportunity of seeing what was going on. We did not regret the choice we made, though the election took place a fort-night later on, when we were in the West. The hotel, like all other large hotels in America, has a wonderful system of organization; each department seems to be perfect in itself, but each one depended on

and worked round the great central feature of every American hotel, viz., the counting-house in the central hall, to which, and to a “bar,” billiard-room, newspaper-stall, shaving-saloon (a most important institution in every hotel), gentleman's writing-room, an odd shop or two, and a railway ticket office, the whole basement of the building is given up. There is always a private side-door for families to enter by, but these are generally sent up at once to the floors above by one of the hoists with which the hotels are all liberally provided. The ground floors are always paved with marble and adorned with advertisements, a few seats and forms being the only furniture. The central hall is generally thronged with earnest-looking promenaders, who smoke and talk, go out and come in, as on an Exchange on market-days. A few use the “bar” at intervals, though to a less extent than one would think; indeed, in good hotels this department was very rarely a busy one. The barber's shop was always a far more active department in every hotel. Almost all Americans think 17 it necessary to employ a barber, and the American custom of either shaving entirely or, worse still, shaving the whiskers, and leaving only a small beard round the chin, is quite a national characteristic, and, till one gets used to it, a good face, in my opinion, has imparted to it a very common-place expression. Another very active department in every American hotel is that in which boots are cleaned. In the Fifth Avenue Hotel six or seven Irishmen did nothing from morning to night but blacken and shine the boots of a constant succession of customers, who seated themselves in high arm-chairs, placed on stillages about two feet high. The operation, owing to the elevation the customer is put on, looks far more important than that in a dentist's operating-room. The owner of the boots sits majestically on the high chair, placing each foot on an iron footstool provided with guards to catch the soles and steady the foot; he draws his breath, has his trousers turned up, and the Irishman sets to with a will to polish the boots very often of the oppressors of his native land.

On the first floor upstairs there were in the Fifth Avenue Hotel, as in all others, according to their size, spacious corridors furnished with couches and seats; drawing-rooms opening from them for the use of ladies, their families, and friends; whilst dining saloons of different

sizes occupied most of the remaining space. The floors above were used for bedrooms and suites of rooms, which, as far as our experience went, were scrupulously clean, and comfortable in every respect; there C 18 were no extra adornments, but all the arrangements were good and well adapted for the comfort of a traveller. One thing we soon found out, and that was, that boot-cleaning in almost every hotel was an “ *extra* ” and was not covered by the charge of *so much per day* . At Chicago, when staying in the noted Palmer House, one of the best hotels in America, we thought we might put our boots out for cleaning when we went to bed, but the night watchman going his rounds got sight of them, and roused us up to take them in, adding, “If you do not, they will be stolen.”

The large hotels in America have splendid public rooms and the dining arrangements are very perfect, but, at the same time, there is a great deal of sameness about the cookery. The attendance is generally very good in a way, but the dishes, which are very numerous, are put on the table on small plates of about five inches in length very much at the same time, and they are consequently very apt to get cold. An ordinary waiter thinks he is pleasing the guest by putting on as much as he can at once, confining his subsequent attention to seeing that the supply of iced water never fails. The waiters in the New York Hotel were apparently all Irish, but in all the other towns we visited we were waited on by Blacks, and a very honest and happy set of men they were. They seemed to like the work, and the work seemed to be specially made for them. Thirty or forty negroes at a time, in a dining-room resplendent with gold decorations and mirrors, made the silver-plate and the white linen table-cloths to fairly shine and look bright and white by 19 contrast. We could not help feeling the service of these kindly curly-haired, smiling, careless ebony faces to be more conducive to digestion and festivity at table than was that of the white waiters already alluded to.

I mentioned that the centre of everything in an American hotel was the counting-house on the groundfloor. To this, an open room with a counter space like in an ordinary bank, every one resorts for rooms, letters, information regarding routes, posts, callers, parcels, carriages, sights, complaints, luggage; and the officiating clerks either give the information

off-hand or get it by calling to their assistance one or other of some eight or ten attendant messengers, who may always be seen waiting in a row within the officer's call. These hotel clerks are men of great administrative ability, and command very liberal salaries, and are of far greater importance in the economy of an American hotel than would be an hotel official here in nominally a far higher position.

The “bar” is another distinctive feature in an American hotel; it is generally a rounded counter at one side of a large well-ventilated room. Two or three grave and earnest-looking men stand behind it; they seem to know their business, and to attend to it. You ask for what you want and they give it you. There are no dressed-out young women who serve as *counter* attractions, and who carry on more or less pronounced or active or passive flirtations with “Champagne Charlies,” or young men who think it the correct thing to “spoon.” Our experience of American bars was most distinctively favourable. The 20 “bar” was a requisite in the hotel (or was thought to be); it was attended to properly; you got refreshment, if you wanted it, well and scientifically decocted. The bartender was a superior man for his station in life; he attended to his business, and the customer, when he had been attended to, went about his. When whisky is asked for, the bottle is put down to the customer, who takes what he thinks fit, and the liberty given in this respect does not seem to be abused. In the case of the more elaborate decoctions, the whole arrangement is left in the hands of the barman.

We had hoped to go from New York to Niagara by way of the Hudson, so as to see the scenery of that classic river, but we heard, when in New York, that snow had already fallen in Canada, and the fact that the steamers were taken off the rivers and lakes was a very evident sign that winter was at hand. Luckily we experienced no particular signs of winter during our stay, except the passing through a slight snow-storm on our way north, and again, as fate would have it, when we broke a journey of twenty-five hours from Cincinnati to Richmond by staying half-way at an inn, in a small watering-place or spa only frequented by summer visitors. We could easily believe that the inn would be cool in summer, but a wooden house with numerous crevices and scanty bed-clothes was

not what we would have selected for late autumn. I do not think any of us grudged the uncomfortable experience we gained that frosty night in the midst of the lovely scenery of Kanagawa Falls, especially 21 as it set off by comparison all our other nights' lodgings to great advantage. A first-rate breakfast and roaring coal fires, together with splendid surrounding scenery, soon put us all right, and we set off on our journey to Richmond from this spot in the best of humours.

But I am anticipating—indeed, it is difficult to keep from anticipating and diverging, each scene and experience suggests something to say; and seeing that I have not chosen a definite title, but only that of “A Chat about America,” I must restrain myself, or the time or space at my disposal will get exhausted before we have got half-way on our journey.

We determined, I have said, owing to the signs of approaching winter, to start at once for Montreal, leaving more sight-seeing in New York for our return, and so, at eight on the morning of the 25th October, we started by the Hudson River Railroad, which runs generally close to the river and along its eastern bank, affording us very fine and satisfactory views of the opposite shore, the side possessing the finest scenery. All things considered, we saw the views under more favourable circumstances even than we could have done from the deck of a steamer, with the damp of the river and the snow-storms which now and again fell as we got further north.

Before starting, we looked over our luggage, and left a good deal of it behind as unnecessary. We often wished, when on our further journeys, that we had left even more of it. Travelling as we did, we found that a good many etceteras might well be dispensed with or sent 22 on to some central point; but, at the same time, there is always some comfort in feeling that if “the unexpected” did happen, the *extras* would be very acceptable. We were driven to the railroad station by the hotel omnibus. Nothing reminded me more of my previous visit to America than this; the distance was about a mile and the fare was 75 cents, or 3s. each. It is minor charges of this kind that make travelling expenses to creep up in America. You know to a cent what the railway journey will cost. Your hotel bill

is three, four, or five dollars per day according to its class; after that you “express” your luggage and pay your tram; you pay for getting shaved and getting your boots blackened, but afterwards you need not spend *one cent* , except you like. The 10 cents, or 5d., for cleaning your boots every morning, the same for getting shaved, and 40 cents, or 20d., for getting your hair cut once a month, are bad enough, but other extra expenditure has to be on even a higher scale, and the result is that people spend almost nothing on etceteras if they wish to live economically or even reasonably. But we are at the railway station (called universally the “depot” in America), our luggage is checked for Montreal, and we have nothing to do but to tender our vouchers and give an address there, when our luggage will follow us to our hotel with reasonable speed. This checking system is perfection in theory, and is wonderfully like it in practice. It has often been held up to us in this country for imitation, and I doubt not it would suit in some cases, as, for example, when *paterfamilias* takes his 23 family with their impedimenta for the summer months to the sea-side or to the moors. Put in practice here, for the every-day traveller, I feel assured there would be soon an awful out-cry; nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand of us like to drive up to a station, to put a portmanteau or box into the train, and be off in two or three minutes, reversing the operation on arriving at the other end. The English hate officialism or exactness; they like to take care of themselves. The French are the only real exponents of perfection, and they fail, I think, on that very account. The Duke of Wellington used to say that he always felt the French plans were more *perfect* than his own, but that he thought his success was owing to his power of re-arranging his plans to new circumstances, whereas the French were perfect from the first. I mention this subject because I believe that the perfect system of America would not altogether suit us here, as our circumstances do not run on altogether analogous lines. The distances travelled in America are great, many railway systems are often travelled over, and the conveyances at the terminuses are so extravagantly costly that the checking system has become a necessity in America, whereas our system and appliances make our plans, though less perfect, infinitely preferable for everyday life in this country.

The Presidential contest was often brought before us on our journey—sometimes by the excitement visible at the stations, and sometimes by meeting in the train with politicians "on the stump," travelling in the interest of 24 their respective candidates. One of the most striking experiences in this way was at Brookville, a town near the Canadian frontier, which we reached some time after darkness, and which was the stopping-place for the evening meal, generally called "supper" on American railroads. The refreshment-room was about 150 yards from the train, and the night was pitch dark. We found ourselves surrounded by at least one thousand Democrats, who had been attending a political meeting, and we had some trouble in elbowing our way through them. Some of them carried lamps; many were in grotesque fancy dresses; some were drunk; all were excited; and many were shouting party-cries, the meaning of which we did not understand. There were, besides, half a dozen brass bands, and Knot Mill in all its glory could not have surpassed the scene. We made a very hurried meal, being quite uncertain how long we would require to get back to our carriage, owing to the crowd. Fortunately we were in a Pullman car; the ordinary ones were soon crammed to suffocation. Two days afterwards we read in the Montreal papers that about the time we were at Brookville a man had been shot, another had been run over, and a mill had been burnt down, all owing to the excitement attending the demonstration we witnessed. The wonder was that the trains did not run over more, as the railway track seemed to be the very centre of attraction for the crowd. We were still two hours or so from Montreal, and we lost none of the scenery through falling asleep. We awakened to find ourselves crossing 25 the St. Lawrence River by the celebrated Victoria Bridge. This bridge is accounted one of the wonders of the world, and is certainly a triumph of engineering skill. It was completed, after five years' labour, in 1859, from the designs of Robert Stevenson and A. M. Ross. The bridge is 9,184 feet in length, and consists of a central tube 330 feet long, and of six pairs of double tubes on either side, each 242 feet in length. The central tube is sixty feet above the summer level of the river. I have photographs of the ice piled against the piers in winter, and the sight must be a

wonderful one indeed. The strength of the piers and their shape indicated very plainly what was the strain they were expected to resist in a Canadian winter.

Montreal, till within the last few years, was behind the day as regards its hotel accommodation, and nothing reminded the traveller arriving from New York more strikingly that he had left the States than his experience in this respect. But Montreal has now an hotel which is an “institution,” an hotel of which any American city might be proud. I read an advertisement regarding it which does not go beyond the truth, so I give it verbatim. It says: “This splendid new hotel, the finest in Canada and one of the best in the world, occupies high ground in Dominion Square, near Mount Royal Park, and on the main avenue leading thereto. Whether for the man of business or the pleasure-seeker, the ‘ *Windsor* ’ will be found an elegant and convenient home.”

You will notice the name of the hotel. This in a town 26 where more than half the population is of French descent, and whose every-day language is also French, speaks strongly for the loyalty of the inhabitants, and, what is still more striking, is that the French-speaking inhabitants are, if possible, the more loyal of the two. By this I mean that the latter view with greater dread separation from Great Britain than do the English-speaking inhabitants, who are, however, deeply attached to their mother country by the ties of affection and sympathy. The difference in the two loyalties seem to be that the English-speaking and Protestant inhabitants are loyal from old association and pride in their origin; whilst the French population, which is intensely Roman Catholic, are loyal from self-interest, from recognition of the liberty they possess, and from the dread that with American rule or an Independent Republic the special protection they receive and the special privileges their religion enjoys might be done away with. I had previously observed in a largish town in one of the New England States, not far from Lower Canada, that the names in the Directory were French. These French Canadians flock over the border as do the Irish here, chiefly, however, during the long Canadian winter, returning to their native villages during summer. I was told that the priests in Canada view this migration with disfavour, as too often, in their opinion, the young men return with rather advanced views,

and with less inclination to implicit obedience than is shown by their friends who remain at home. The extent to which the civil power in Lower Canada aids the 27 Roman Catholic Church in making compulsory, assessments made for buildings and repairs of churches, etc., may account for some portion of the loyalty of the priests.

Every one knows that the three great cities of Canada, as regards population and influence, are Quebec, Montreal, and Toronto, and that Quebec is French, Montreal half French and half English, Toronto English, almost entirely. Montreal, through this, is somewhat placed at a disadvantage, and is not such a fine-looking town as its population might perhaps lead one to expect. It is really two towns placed side by side, with two populations, one French and the other English; two prevailing religions, two sets of charities, two sets of newspapers, two sets of shops, and, of course, two languages. The town does not really do itself justice in consequence, but, for all that, it has a splendid trade, and from all one can learn it must possess a splendid future. Montreal is situated, as every one knows, on the St. Lawrence River, which is the river that, coming from the great North American lakes, falls with such volume over the falls at Niagara, and after passing through Lake Ontario pursues its mighty course down the rapids above Montreal. It is a fresh-water river for 250 miles from Montreal, and not for 750 miles still further does it enter the sea. Consequently Montreal is a thousand miles from the Atlantic by way of the river, and it is 315 miles nearer to Liverpool than is New York. It is thus, from its situation and water communication, specially cut out for being a depot 28 for the produce of the fertile West and North, and the great development of these regions cannot but advantage its future. Immediately above the city a ship canal enables vessels to avoid the rapids which are close to it. This canal is about nine miles long and averages about 180 feet in width. Pleasure travellers do not, of course, avail themselves of the canal, but rather pride themselves on “shooting,” as it is called, the rapids.

As we were travelling westwards and against the stream, we took an early train one morning to a point eight or nine miles up the river, where a small steamer was waiting to make the run down the rapids, and so back to Montreal. At first, after starting, we noticed

a peculiar current round the ship; then little eddies and broken waves were observable, acting in an erratic manner as if the water did not know what to do with itself and could not make up its mind which way to go. Then an appearance on every side as if there were currents and springs bubbling up from below; then a current would suddenly run off on its own private account, quite in a placid way, as if with the intention of paying a friendly visit to some island at a distance to the right, or to the left. At last the ship made a drop bodily of two feet or more, and we sped on as if in a mill-race. For some minutes we were rushing on with high banks of water on one side, then with higher banks of water on the other, and every now and again with a still higher one right in front of us, making further progress apparently an impossibility. The ship answered her helm to perfection, and the pilots were 29 evidently quite at home amidst the raging waters; but at times the situation, for a novice, was sufficiently exciting. However, when the turmoil began to abate, we felt really sorry that all was over. Before long the river was again calm and placid, and we found ourselves steaming under the great tubular bridge which I have already spoken of, whose dimensions we could now better realize, and in a few minutes afterwards the full view of the Montreal quays, with the Custom-house, ocean steamers, and craft of all kinds, was before us, and we landed, amidst the turmoil of the harbour, and hurried off to our well-earned and somewhat delayed breakfast.

We came in contact with officials of the Hudson Bay Company, with bankers, and particularly with a gentleman formerly residing here, and now of great repute and influence in Canada. I mean Mr. Angus, of the Canadian Pacific Railway. From all we received great attention, and at the hospitable table of the latter we got a great deal of interesting information regarding the railway with which he is connected, and which is the greatest enterprise ever undertaken in Canada, and in some ways in America. The construction of this railway was made a *sine quâ non* in arranging for British Columbia entering the Canadian federation, and never was railway more fostered and subsidized by a government than has this one been, not only to fulfil promises made to British Columbia, but to develop the rich lands of the Red River and Manitoba, but the fertile belt

of Assinibane, and the great territory generally of the North-West. What with 30 gifts of money, gifts of railways already made, government grants of great stretches of public lands, guarantees of interest and special privileges without end, the determination of the Government and people of Canada to bring the undertaking to a successful issue has been shown in a most unmistakable manner. The railway had been contemplated from 1871, but owing to changes of government there were numerous interruptions and delays, and it was only in 1880 that work was commenced in earnest. The Vice-President of the line, whose acquaintance we had the pleasure of making, was very sanguine that by August, 1885, the line would be open from Montreal to Port Mudie in British Columbia —in other words, from the Atlantic to the Pacific—and his anticipations of speed, if only approximately realized, will produce great changes in the communication between Europe and the East. The distance between Montreal and Port Mudie is about 2,900 miles, and it is to be hoped, in the interests of the railways, that the expectations formed as to its importance as a means of communication for goods and passengers between this country, Japan, and China may not be disappointed. Certainly, if the main line is as well made as is the branch we travelled on between Montreal and Ottawa, no one could help giving it the palm for comfort among the railways of America.

It was difficult to believe when travelling to Ottawa next morning that we were on a line just opened. The journey in question was made in three or four hours, and the time passed only too quickly. The Grand Trunk 31 Railway, the older route, runs alongside of the St. Lawrence, and afterwards along the shore of Lake Ontario; but the Canadian Pacific Railway, by which we travelled to Ottawa, took a direct route, and coasted along the Ottawa river. This route had only been opened up for a few weeks, and we were very thankful we had followed the advice of those who recommended us to take it. The apparent prosperity of the country in the cultivated portion was very striking, but never was a land more suggestive of the “land of the mountain and the flood,” and the first appearance of Ottawa with its splendid Government buildings dominating the scene is singularly suggestive of “mine own romantic town.” The views on the route from Montreal

to Ottawa continually reminded us of pictures by Jacob Ruysdael; every now and again a mountain torrent rushed under the railway line to swell the Ottawa river or one of its tributaries, and the only thing wanting to complete the picture was the familiar water-wheel with which Ruysdael's pictures are generally furnished. Lumber along the route, as on many another, was a conspicuous industry, the rapid river being favourable for its transference; and it was also very interesting to note the strange mixture of French and English, or rather French and Scotch, names along the way.

Approaching Ottawa, a splendid view is obtained of the place, but the chief, perhaps the only striking, feature of the city is the Parliament building, with other Dominion buildings adjoining, which, standing on a most commanding 32 height, seem, if they have a fault, to be too grand for the other works of man by which they are surrounded, though not a whit too fine for the noble works of nature visible on every side.

The city of Ottawa is *new* beyond description; the buildings are not too substantial, though here and there a *block* may be seen with some pretensions to architecture, but after Montreal they do really appear flimsy. The city has a population of 27,500 inhabitants, and is situated at the junction of the Rideau River and the River Ottawa. From the grounds of the Parliament buildings the view is surpassingly grand. The rivers below and the distant hills, with the rapids of the Ottawa, terminating in the Chaudière, or caldron, in the foreground, from which the spray rises like steam to a great height, form a panoramic view that can never be forgotten. One sight seemed to be out of place and to destroy the romance of the view, and that was that “far to the East and West there lay extended in succession,” not gay, but methodically arranged piles upon piles of timber of enormous height and extent—the scene being tempered by the aroma of new wood, which rose like pine incense from the plains to the heights on which we stood. The river, too—where the current did not reach—was heavily loaded with saw-dust from countless saw-mills at work on every side. I have heard a legend to the effect that the river steamers, when forcing their way through the dusty mass, find it so dense that they throw up shavings from the advancing bows; and the legend is founded on something 33 approaching fact. The

Official Handbook for Canada, compiled for the late meeting of the British Association, says that the Dominion buildings in Ottawa cover an area of four acres. The central building is 472 feet in length; the tower over the entrance is 220 feet high. In this building the Legislative business of the Dominion is carried on, and all departments connected with the Senate and House of Commons are located in it. To the right of the central Parliament buildings are buildings corresponding in architecture, and containing all the different departments of the Dominion Government, such as state, finance, interior, justice, post-office, public works, etc. The representatives travel of course from great distances, and I am afraid to say how long some of the representatives from the Pacific districts now take to reach Ottawa. It will be easily understood how great, under these circumstances, is the necessity for speedy communication in order to consolidate the Dominion. The debates in the Canadian Parliament were, we were told by our guide over the building, carried on in either English or French, according to the fancy or choice of the speaker, and that in a general way procedure was fashioned after that in Westminster.

There had been a fall of rain and snow during the night previous to our arrival, and the condition of the streets and roads was something to behold and remember with wonder and astonishment. I do not exaggerate when I say that as a rule there was a depth of six inches of liquid mud in the chief streets, and as it was dark D 34 when we found our way to the railway station to take the sleeping-car for Toronto, we were not able to pick the shallowest crossings. It was some consolation to read in the papers a day or two afterwards that the Mayor of Ottawa was to be impeached for allowing such a state of things, but I fear the threat was only meant as a piece of colonial wit, and that nothing came of it. Somebody, however, *did* deserve to be made an example of.

We went to our berths in the sleeping-car, and were attached to the night train from Montreal; but we were asleep at the time, and were innocent of everything till it was broad day-light and our train about sixty miles from Toronto. As we approached this city the appearance of the country was wonderfully pleasing. It looked like a well-farmed district in Scotland or Cheshire, though the zig-zag fences, formed of six or seven rails, some eight

or nine feet long each, told at once that we were in Canada. There was an appearance of abundance and comfort on every side that was most pleasing, and the cattle in the fields showed signs of care and careful breeding.

Toronto is a wonderful contrast to Montreal, from which it is only distant about three hundred miles. The French element, which is all powerful in Quebec, half-and-half influential in Montreal, disappears entirely in Toronto, which in many respects may be called really the capital of Canada as regards education and legal business. There is a certain literary character pervading the town, and the citizens are perfectly aware of the fact, and are not afraid to speak about it. I had seen the 35 city some thirteen years before, and had been greatly pleased with it then; but I was not prepared to see such a great improvement as evidently *had* taken place in the meantime. The streets were in splendid order, and were alive with business; whilst the street architecture generally, and the churches and public buildings were very striking. We would willingly have stayed some time in Toronto; indeed, we were all struck with the idea that it was a city to spend one's life in, if necessary; but our route was marked out, and we had to be at Niagara by nightfall —some seventy or eighty miles distant—and we had to tear ourselves away from a town which seemed, from the hurried glance we got of it, to have particular attractions. The country, as we left Toronto, got richer and richer. The best farms in America are in this part of Canada, and land brings prices that would sound incredible to people who talk of the excessive rents of the old country.

We were now in the last days of October; the river steamers, as I have said, had been taken off a fortnight or more before, and it was not to be wondered at that Niagara had, when we arrived there, already begun to put on its early winter garb. We were advised in Montreal—and, as it turned out, the advice was good—to go to a small hotel on the Canada side. The large hotel on the Canada side was closed, and the season hotels on the American side were also shut up for the winter. The small hotel we put up at has its season in the autumn and winter time, and a dozen guests made 36 the place fairly busy. I see on re-reading a letter written home that I say we were waited on by a handsome

negro, and thoroughly enjoyed our evening meal; the beef-steaks, ham and eggs, and tea were faultless, and the dining-room and sitting-room quite enjoyable, though, from their plainness, in every way diametrically different from the gilded rooms we had lately been accustomed to in New York and Montreal.

I have now been twice at Niagara, once in the season and again out of the season, and I can most conscientiously recommend the latter period to an intending traveller. During the season proper there seems to be concentrated there every imaginable harpy to prey on the traveller. The two sides of the river produce numberless pirates; those on the Canada side making up for their lesser number by their greater rapacity. On our present visit the travellers were few and far between, and not worth the attention of the harpies who frequent the place at other times, who had probably transferred their sphere of action to more frequented scenes.

On the afternoon of our arrival from Toronto, we were certainly driven to sights which were perhaps merely excuses to induce us to buy photographs and curiosities, but on our way we crossed bridges which gave us some idea of the wonderful strength of the water-courses between the different islands past which the St. Lawrence rushes. We were told that the current under one bridge we crossed was running at the rate of thirty-seven miles per hour; but if we had been told that it was at the rate 37 of fifty, we would not have been astonished, though we afterwards learned that twenty-five was probably nearer the mark. It was beginning to be darkish when we started for our drive, but even at that time, and with swindling " *out of season* ," we were often importuned to get out of our carriage to view the scenery "gratis" from the roof of a shop which had two or three stories full of photographs and Indian and other curiosities. We were driven by our carman, of course, to the "Island of the Burning Fountain," which the guide-books and guides say ought by all means to be seen. The "Burning Fountain" was in a hole about two feet in diameter and some four feet deep. A little gas was given off which gave now and again a little flash when a candle was held down to it. Perhaps more gas is given off in the season;

at the time of our visit the display was somewhat a failure, and we were pressed to buy photographs instead.

After our evening meal, which I have described, we walked over the great suspension bridge before retiring for the night, reserving our expression of opinion regarding the falls till we could see them properly next day. We went to sleep with the dull roar of waters a few hundred yards distant from us for a lullaby, and with our bedroom window frames shaking uninterruptedly, and most markedly, with a monotonous and regular beat.

One hundred yards from the hotel the road was wet as from heavy rain, in consequence of the wind blowing the spray from the falls, and the few trees about were dwarfed owing to this excess of moisture.

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On the morning after our arrival we saw the falls in all their glory, and before we took our last view of them, we fully realized the truth of the remark often made that they grow on the spectator the longer he views them. The visitor's first feeling, and this I realized very particularly when I first saw Niagara, is one of disappointment, aggravated doubtless by the persistent attempts at swindling one has been subjected to in trying to approach to them, but every minute lends enchantment to the view, and I believe a stay of weeks would intensify one's admiration immensely. We saw the view from every side, and went through the experience of visiting the “Cave of the Winds,” and some other experiences not often undertaken. Before we visited the “Cave of the Winds” we were divested of our clothes, clad in oil-skins, and shod with thick felt shoes tied by strong strings tightly on to our feet. Our necks were tied up with string to keep the wet from running from our faces down our bodies. I was, as the senior of the party, decorated with a key attached to my neck by a string. This key was that of a box in which the valuables—the watches, money, etc., of our party—were enclosed. The necessity for the tying was not apparent at first, but those of our party who surreptitiously retained any of their normal attire were quite convinced before long that articles liable to water damage were better left behind. The felt

coverings for our feet—no Indian or Celtic name would describe them—were invaluable. Shoes of any description, or foot-covers peculiar to any 39 nationality, would have been useless. The felt had a kind of knack of clinging to the ground when dry, and when it got wet, as it did very speedily, it clung by suction to the slippery rocks. Progress, or indeed the maintenance of equilibrium, would have been impossible without them. We descended a tower, about eighty feet high, by a spiral stair, but the total distance from the top of the bank to the bottom is 185 feet.

The *Cave of the Winds* is formed by the action of the water on the lime-stone rock, which is left arching overhead. The fall forms a curtain in front, and, owing to the pressure of the atmosphere, the cave is filled with everlasting storms and a chaotic war of conflicting elements. The roar of the waters, the howling of the winds, and the torrents dashed from every side on to our oil-skin garments, which exaggerated the noise and further deafened us, made a scene that a pen can only faintly describe. We were more than thankful that our return journey was made in *front* of instead of *behind* the cataract, and that we had not to undergo a second experience of the same kind. Our gratitude was unbounded when we fairly reached the tower again; and we felt like new beings when we reached the top and found our chilled limbs again encased in the garments of civilization.

Referring to a letter written home next day from Detroit, I see that I say that *had I known what we had to go through on that occasion I would not have attempted it* . The shower of falling water on us and around us 40 was beyond belief, and we were fairly blinded by the wind and the drifting rain. Could it be possible that the genii of the cave, knowing whence we came, thought it incumbent on them to make a demonstration in honour of Thirlmere! Some of the *savants* attending the British Association a month earlier have written on this subject, I believe; but if they have written otherwise—and of this I am ignorant—I must suppose that Niagara was on better behaviour than usual for the occasion. On our visit we could only see a few yards before us; every now and again we walked along little ladders and planks, with torrents beneath us and torrents above us, slippery rocks on every side, to which we clung, fly-like, with our patent suction shoes or scraps of felt, whilst twelve

dozen shower-baths seemed to be pouring down on us with the noise of a tropical hail-storm.

It is a perfect farce to attempt to describe Niagara; the falls and the rapids below them equally baffle description. I will content myself with saying that Niagara is the outlet by which the waters of Lakes Superior, Michigan, Huron, and Erie—in fact, the great waters of the American lake land—are passed into Lake Ontario, and thence onwards through the St. Lawrence to the Atlantic. The gigantic force of these rapids below the falls, measuring at one point only a hundred yards across, is, to my mind, even more impressive than the great falls themselves. In these rapids the well-known professional swimmer, Captain Webb, met with his death. We were opposite to the spot in these 41 cataracts where he was last seen alive, and how he could have been otherwise than dashed to death in such a turmoil, the sight of the raging waters sufficiently answered. His death, of course, has been availed of as an additional attraction to the spot. The modest youth who “showed us round” told us that it had brought him in a very good income during the year, as no *gentleman* had ever thought of enlisting his services without giving him a handsome remuneration, especially as he had seen with his own eyes the last glimpse of Captain Webb before he entered on the fatal current of waters. As we were the only visitors that day, in all probability, we had, of course, to respond to the well-veiled demand for a tip, which was thus so modestly expressed, *for Niagara* .

From Niagara we went on to Detroit, where we found our watches out of sympathy with their fellows there. We had had our time-pieces regulated by Canadian time, and consequently they indicated 11–25 p.m. when we arrived at Detroit; but Detroit time, we found out, was 10–45 p.m., and, to make matters worse, we found that Detroit *railway* time was that of Chicago, so that, for all practical purposes, we were at 10–25 p.m., or an abrupt retrocession of an hour in a very few minutes. This may suggest the idea that our life is lengthened by going West; but, at any rate, it shows the absurdity of our forefathers,

who cavilled at and in some cases rebelled to the extent of actual riot when Old Style was superseded by the New.

We are now leaving Canada West, and entering on a string of Western American cities of which Detroit is 42 the first. Detroit is opposite to the Canadian town of Windsor, and is only separated from it by the river of the same name, about half a mile wide, which in French signifies and well describes the geographical term—a *strait* . The situation of the city in the great chain of lake navigation is a very commanding one, being only a few miles south of Lake Huron and a few miles north of Lake Erie. The river, which joins the two by way of Lake St. Clair, a small intervening lake, is only about three-quarters of a mile in width. The trains going East and West are ferried across on large steamers built for the purpose, and, crossing by one of them, we soon found ourselves at the landing-stage and railway station of Detroit.

Detroit has that appearance of energy and “go-aheadism” which is particularly associated with the United States, and presents a great contrast to even the energy of Canada. This cannot but strike the most casual observer. There is an increased amount of “go” visible in the numerous railways, the miles of trains, the public buildings, and the general bustle in the town. This contrast, which is evident half a mile from the Canada frontier, was still more visible when the next large town we visited was reached—I mean Chicago. Our railway journey was one of twelve hours, and we passed through a succession of busy towns, many of them of a rather *wooden* style of architecture, but here and there some solidly constructed buildings and churches were conspicuously observable. The streets of the towns which are 43 passed at right angles by the train were perfectly innocent of “Macadam” or stone sets, and in wet weather or winter must often be quagmires.

Our journey was through a rich and well-cultivated country, and the towns were more substantial, the farm houses larger and better built, and the fields better cultivated and fenced in than they were twelve years before when we had passed through them.

Michigan, which is the first State of the Union passed through going west, is a great agricultural State, and for wheat-growing ranks fourth in the United States. As we passed through it on the last day of October, we saw the winter-sown wheat covering the well-tilled fields with a mantle of green, and suggesting, with the bright sun and the lively surroundings, helped on by the election excitement, rather the month of April than gloomy November, which was to be ushered in on the morrow.

At night we arrived at Chicago, the capital of the great State of Illinois, and a city which, from a variety of circumstances, has always had a peculiar interest and charm for me. To describe this city would require an evening for itself, and I can only devote a few minutes to it, but I would like to say so much regarding it that I hardly know where to begin. In a few words I may say that the city is situated on the flat prairie shore of Lake Michigan. It is intersected by a river of the same name, which runs through it for a mile and then biforcates to the North-west and South-west, affording wharfage of unlimited extent. Driving about the town and suburbs 44 it is only by careful study of a map that a visitor can understand the way in which these branches run, enabling large vessels to discharge their cargoes in an extended district of the city, and thus explaining how the enormous piles of lumber and other produce are piled to advantage in what, at first sight, appear most unsuitable and inaccessible positions. This wonderful city, when I was born, was an Indian village, and to day the population is more than 600,000. The new edition of the “Encyclopædia Britannica” gives the volume of its trade in 1875 as £131,400,000. The chief trades are “hog-packing,” as it is called (upwards of two millions of hogs are packed each year for shipment), beef-packing, brewing, distilling, iron manufactures of all kinds, and manufactures of wood, leather, chemicals, cotton, etc. Eighteen trunk railway lines run from the town. When I saw the city in 1871, immediately before the fire, I was greatly struck by the number of fine solid railway stations it possessed—a wonderful contrast to the flimsy erections in New York and other cities at that time.

The Chicago fire of 1871 is one of the great events of history, and in the extent of the damage done by it, it is only comparable to the great fire of London. Two thousand one hundred and twenty-four acres of closely-built property were burnt—an extent of more than three and a quarter square miles. The embers were hardly cold before re-building commenced, and Chicago has long been in many respects the finest city of America after New York. One feature of the town, 45 which acts most advantageously in making its position on the lake different from other towns as regards the beauty of its water frontage, is that the river and its branches cause the wharves to be in the central districts of the city. The lake side is therefore unpolluted, and promenades and parks run all along the coast for many miles uncontaminated by wharves and warehouses. These parks are of great extent, and driving through their vastnesses we could not help wondering whether, all things considered, they were not more striking in many ways than the parks of London or Paris.

The residences along the lake side were marvellously solid and expensive. The architecture was of a varied description, and suggested the idea that the architects had had a good deal of their own way in the construction, and had consequently indulged in the gratification of their own fads and architectural fancies, as is sometimes the case with architects even in England. The good houses were mostly detached, but they were only separated from the next one by a short space. There were no flower gardens visible—nothing but grass-plots, and very occasionally a greenhouse.

We put up at the Palmer House Hotel—an establishment with a reputation of its own, and in its way second to none in America. Its management was creditable to a degree. Everything about it seemed to move with the precision of a regiment, and the whole establishment gave one the idea that it was managed by a master mind. Cleanliness was a distinguishing feature of the bedrooms 46 and the living and sitting-rooms. I counted twenty-four tables in the chief dining-room, with eight chairs at each. There was plenty of passage room between each table, and through folding doors we saw a second dining-

room further on. These rooms were very lofty and well ornamented. The floors were of white marble, and each table was watched over by two negroes with white ties, and the usual expression of happiness on their kindly visages. This contented expression, as we had remarked before, was very striking, and still more so was the softness of their voices, which contrasted marvellously with the shrill tones of many ladies resplendent with diamonds, who sat at tables on either side of us.

On Sunday we went to the second Presbyterian Church, which we were told was the most important church in Chicago, and, judging from the congregation we saw, we could well understand this to be the case. The singing was very elaborate and typically American. As is often the case in America, the singing was conducted by a professional quartet-party, who occupied a room or gallery under the organ, and who became invisible as soon as their voices were inaudible. The Psalms were chanted by the choir and congregation alternately. The minister, Mr. McPherson, was doubtless of Scotch descent, but a native-born American or Canadian, and a convincing proof that a Scotchman, at any rate, does not deteriorate in America. The son of the late President, Abraham Lincoln, sat near us—a plain, unassuming man of forty years old or so, and at that time Secretary of War.

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At night we went to the Episcopal Cathedral, in consequence of the son of a former bishop being one of our fellow-travellers from England. The Bishop of Illinois officiated. The Church service was what would be called “high” here, but the place was a poor one; the arrangements were second-rate though pretentious, indicating in every way want of means and a want of harmony and sympathy with the national feeling. The service was choral throughout, and the Bishop looked and preached as if his grey hairs and striking form would have been more in keeping with the surroundings of an English parish church or cathedral than they were with busy matter-of-fact Chicago.

Next morning we drove to the noted stock-yards, then in full operation. The firm whose premises we had an order to inspect were killing at the time four thousand pigs per day

and about seven hundred head of cattle. The killing process is a very sickening one, and some of our party did not get over the spectacle for some time. The pigs are drawn up by a hind leg from a pen one by one, on to a stage or platform, where a man pushes a knife into their throats and then dexterously severs the jugular vein. The pigs are then run along a rope whilst still struggling and kicking—but it is no use to go too minutely into the description. The pigs are thrown into vats filled with boiling water, from which a revolving scoop lifts them on to a table where a brush revolves round them, cleaning off the bristles as cleanly and efficaciously as if a dexterous barber had shaved them. The further process 48 of salting and packing were afterwards explained to us. The cattle to be slaughtered were, contrary to our preconceived ideas on the subject, driven into little passages or divisions containing two animals each, and a man passing over the pens by means of a slight stage, some ten feet from the ground, shot the unexpecting animals with a small rifle through the back of the head. The animals generally dropped dead instantly with a heavy thud, but to make assurance doubly sure, the executioner returned over his beat and gave a second and even a third shot to any animal unusually tenacious of life. The shooter on the present occasion, perhaps pardonably, interrupted at times the first and second shots to allow of his indulging in lively chaff on the subject of the great Presidential election which was to take place on the morrow.

The journey of eleven hours from Chicago to St. Louis, made on the day of the Presidential election, was a most pleasant one. The country we passed through was actually and potentially a flourishing one, and we were astonished to see the stone quarries on our route, which displayed to our astonished eyes slabs of wonderful size; coal pits indicating immense powers of production were often seen, whilst flourishing farms, with pigs and pumpkins mixed up together, were constant features of the landscape.

The railway stations were, of course, alive with anxious inquirers about the election, but we could give them no information, being as anxious for information and the last 49 news

as were they. These way-side towns do not yet seem to have got to the civilization of an afternoon or evening paper, and in this, perhaps, they show their wisdom.

St. Louis, situated on the Mississippi, is one of the oldest towns in the west of America, having been founded as a trading station 120 years ago, but it has only formed part of the United States since the early part of this century. When I had seen it thirteen years ago, I was under the impression that it had a preponderating advantage, as regards its future, over Chicago, from which it is only three hundred miles distant. Chicago, it was true, had the key of the lake traffic, but St. Louis was first on the highway from the West, and had the Mississippi running through it. Since then the great bridge over the Mississippi has been completed, and St. Louis has, in consequence of traffic being conveyed past it, not made the advance that might have been expected. Its situation is, however, a most commanding one, and it will most likely retain its position as a central capital for the trade of the North, South, and West, with all of which it has the most perfect communication.

St. Louis and Chicago are jealous to a degree of each other, and they watch each other's development with eager interest—less so now than when I was there before, and when their populations were more nearly similar. At that time, I remember that St. Louis was furious about Chicago, owing to some extension of her city boundaries, having gained some advantage as regards E 50 population, which advantage the local papers characterized as being mean to a degree. Enmities between towns are not often shown in Britain, though one of our best, but now not often read, novelists—Galt—has well described the jealousy between Greenock and Port Glasgow, and the jokes about Paisley made by Glasgow men are matters of almost classic history. The taunt against Paisley that it is a suburb of Glasgow cannot, I hope, be long levelled against Rusholme, that it is only a suburb of Manchester, as we have lately come to a vote—I hope a wise one—that we are to be amalgamated with the second city of the Empire.

On the St. Louis Exchange, which is a building as worthy of that city as is our Exchange here, the official Wheat Tester showed us how he classified the flour for the official

standards. The system seemed to be very simple and efficient. One plan was to press a standard sample on a small pallette, to cut it straight with a spatulum, and then to join on to it a trade sample treated in the same manner. Pressing the two together the slightest difference in shade is detectable even to an inexperienced eye. We were shown other tests, such as mixing samples with water and afterwards testing what I would call the fibre of the mixture; but the colour test seemed the most relied on, and was certainly the most understandable.

St. Louis may for a time be thrown out of the race, but its future, from its position, is undoubted, and the city must advance as America advances and becomes 51 consolidated. The railway bridge from the West may for a time carry traffic past her, but her commanding position at the head of the Father of Waters must tell in the long run.

From St. Louis we turned south to Cincinnati, which we reached after a travel by night of ten hours. At the station we called a carriage, the driver of which wanted two and a half dollars to drive us to our hotel. We protested against the extravagance of the charge, and got him down to one dollar, when he drove us about one hundred yards to Our hotel, which really adjoined the station!

Cincinnati is, like Chicago, a great pig metropolis, but the business is not so obtrusively brought before you as it is in Chicago, and indeed it may almost be said to be a declining industry there. We saw numerous steamers lying in the river, laid up for the season. We were told it was a great place for building and repairing these vessels, and the forges at work and the overhanging smoke (owing to the configuration of the city's site) showed that it was a place in which iron industries of all kinds were carried on extensively.

Cincinnati is only one hundred years old, and was only incorporated as a city in 1814. It has now a population of 250,000, but by magnificent bridges the Ohio river is crossed, and Covington and Newark in Kentucky, with populations respectively of 25,000 and 15,000, are joined to it. There are really two cities in Cincinnati itself; one is on a plateau elevated

above the 52 steep banks of the river, and another, more residential in its character, on a second ridge higher up. To this higher elevation we were taken by an elevator, which ran on rails inclined at an angle of about eighty degrees. The succession of beautiful villas on the second plateau was very indicative and suggestive of the wealth and prosperity of a great number of the citizens.

I have been making hurried mention of some of the large towns of the West, and I cannot help here noticing that, though on the surface of everything, Anglo-American life is distinctly visible, a little attention and observation discovers the fact that a very large percentage of the inhabitants of the great cities are of foreign, or rather, I should say, of Continental European origin. The car-drivers, the servants, and the “hewers of wood and the drawers of water” are, it is true, often Irish, but there is in the new cities of the West a most preponderating German and Swedish population. New York is the home *par excellence* of the Irish, and Irish servants seem to have the monopoly of the place; but this monopoly is confined, I think, to the city, and does not extend to the State. Thirteen years previously, trying to find a friend whose address I had mistaken, I called at a dozen houses at least in Rochester, New York State, and in almost no instance could the servant who opened the door understand me or answer my inquiry. I was told afterwards they were all either Swedish or Norwegian. I was told by an authority in Chicago that nearly two-thirds of the population were foreign born, and that of the population of 53 600,000 about 200,000 were Germans by birth, and that of the Norwegian and Swedes numbered at least 60,000. In these towns there are a great number of Poles also, who go to swell the large Hebrew population. In writing home I see that I mention that we were told that English in some streets of St. Louis was not spoken. Certainly, the signs in the streets were very foreign in their appearance; but, for all that, the subscribers to the St. Louis Corn Exchange, to which building we were introduced, were distinguished—probably owing to the excitement of the Presidential election—by an intricate knowledge of English slang and strong language generally. Business was to a great extent suspended owing to the election, and many of the distinguished and well-known produce operators looked as if

they had been up all night, and, what was very wonderful, they were not at all ashamed to confess it. The excitement in St. Louis was, beyond all description, great, and must be accepted as an excuse for any demoralization that was observable to travellers who were not “in it,” to use a sporting expression. We had seen something of the excitement attendant on the election when in New York, and even up to the Canadian boundary we had the subject forced on us. For a time, when in Canada, party demonstrations were of course absent, but as soon as we got again on to the soil of the United States, we found the excitement greater than ever. At Chicago we found the streets swarming at night with excited crowds, all shouting for Blaine or Cleveland. The hall of our hotel had seven or eight 54 hundred people in it, all shouting in the same manner; many of them had photographs of their respective candidates stuck in their hats, and most of them wore blue or some other coloured silk ribbon, with a very bold device very visible thereon. No taunt or invective was spared betwixt the excited partisans, and appearances were often in favour of a dreadful fight ensuing; but everything, happily, ended quietly, and the hotel hall cleared like a church as soon as the electric light was turned off and the hall was dependent on two or three depressing gas lights. In the midst of unparalleled excitement in the hotel, the billiard-room was as calm as usual, and the players went on with their play, and the watchers watched them without the least participation in the general uproar, apparently quite unconscious that anything unusual was going on. I was greatly struck with the fact that the “bar” in the hotel seemed to be doing no more business than usual. We heard everywhere the question asked, “Are you ready for to-morrow? Guess we shall lick you, certain!” This was said by Democrats and Republicans indiscriminately. Judging by the newspapers, we found that the *Chicago Times* made Cleveland out to be all that was honourable, straightforward, and good; whereas Blaine was proved to demonstration to be a mercenary rascal, a receiver of bribes, and a swindler of the deepest dye. The *Chicago Tribune* , on the other hand, proved beyond all doubt that Blaine was one of nature's noblemen, and that Cleveland's chiefest joy was to perpetrate the most dreadful crimes. Each gave chapter and verse 55 for its statements, and the extent to which personalities were indulged in was incredible. In the meantime the hotel hall in Chicago was, as I have

said, the lounge of excited numbers of citizens and decorated representatives, who talked and expectorated continually. The marble floors were wet for most of the day and all the evening, and tobacco smoke filled the atmosphere, and cigar ends encumbered the floor. To make matters worse, the temperature in the hotel was artificially raised by hotwater pipes, and the thermometer, though we were in November, indicated the temperature of a pine-house.

St. Louis, on the night of the election, was in a state of uproar, and so was Cincinnati a day or so after, when the result of the election was still uncertain, and when reports of a most contradictory character were handed about continually. Party emblems in these towns were more conspicuous than ever; bands paraded the crowded streets; badges were everywhere worn; many had bantam cocks, life size, fastened on their hats; horns innumerable were blown on every side; and appearances favoured the idea that the whole population had gone mad for the time being.

I could not but be struck with the great sobriety and respectability in appearance of the surging mobs; not a trace of vice was visible, and the crowds of well-dressed men and women seemed to have, with all their shouting, only the object of letting off their political steam, which might have been productive of dreadful results to themselves if restrained.

56

Our next journey was to Richmond—rather too great a skip to take; but our trip was a short one, and we had, to quote a proverb, to cut our coat according to our cloth. The journey from the north of Kentucky to the Atlantic *had to be made, and we faced it* ; but in order to enjoy the country, and see the magnificent scenery on the road, we broke our journey, so that we might have the maximum of day-light for the purpose. The scenery along the route was very fine, and the chief impression left on my mind, derived mainly from our railway travel, was that there is as much possibility of development in the middle States as there is in the Western States or in Canada. The country along the railway was in many districts still covered with virgin forest, and though within a few hours of the finest harbours

in the world it seemed to be neglected and passed over. With the increase of population this state of things cannot long continue, and a great future is undoubtedly in store for this district, so favoured as regards scenery and natural advantages of every kind. We passed valleys down which we saw farstretching views, which, with streams that ran through them, reminded us of the very picked portions of Derbyshire scenery. The mountains were, however, higher, the valleys were wider, and all was on a grander scale than at home. The hill-sides were generally thickly covered with woods of the densest character, which every now and again, though so late in the season, were burning vigorously. Villages were passed at rare intervals, and often for miles we would see no human habitation 57 save a small log shanty, the residence of some squatting negro and his family.

As I have before said, we broke our journey by sleeping half-way at Kanawa Falls, half-way between Cincinnati and Richmond, and as we approached the place by moonlight, and afterwards in the morning, were enchanted with the scenery that surrounded us. This district and its scenery are so well known in America that, in the season, open cars are attached to the trains so that travellers may fully enjoy the landscape. Unfortunately the season was over, and the sharp frost we experienced during the night of our stay reconciled us to the well-heated, closed railway car we entered after breakfast.

After leaving Cincinnati we crossed at once by bridge into Kentucky, and shortly afterwards had our first experience, since we arrived, of a tunnel. On this journey we were particularly glad to learn that in *going through the tunnels* , and later on we were still more particularly glad that *when crossing bridges* , the speed of the train was reduced to a minimum. The railway officials and the engine drivers doubtless know that this course is necessary, and the passengers are of course quite willing to endorse their opinion. On our previous visit we crossed two bridges which we were told were nick-named “slaughter” and “sudden death,” owing to their dangerous and flimsy construction. These names, we trust, are now forgotten, the last dozen years having marvellously improved the condition of American railways and their permanent way generally. We passed 58 several villages, on our way to Richmond, greatly frequented on account of the sulphur springs in their

neighbourhood. When the season is over, the enormous hotels erected there are closed. The waters are in some respects similar to those of Harrogate, and the life at the springs is similar to that led there a generation or two ago. The reputation of these springs is gradually extending in America, and doubtless in a few years they will compete with the spas of Germany.

It was late at night before we arrived at Richmond—the city, *par excellence* , associated with the great civil war which began in 1861. Richmond was the heart of the South, and from it the greatest conflict the world has ever known was directed and kept alive. Battles such as Fair Oaks, Mechanicville, and Cold Harbour were fought at its very doors, as well as scores of conflicts that in other wars would have been looked on as worthy of special note, but are now almost forgotten. In the second battle at Cold Harbour, in 1864, the North are said to have lost 13,000 men, and the campaign around Mechanicville, which lasted seven days, is supposed to have resulted in the loss of 30,000 to 40,000 men. The earth-works of the South are still easily to be traced, and a visit to the cemeteries in Richmond is one of the sights that can never be effaced from the memory. In Hollywood Cemetery—a most lovely spot—there is a massive pyramid of granite, ninety feet in height, standing as a monument to 12,000 Confederate dead buried around it. In this cemetery, too, lie Lieut.-General Alfred Hill; 59 Major-General Pickett, of Gettysburg fame; General Stuart, the famous light horseman; and scores of others whose names were familiar twenty odd years ago. *Oak-wood Cemetery* contains 16,000 Confederate dead, and the *National Cemetery* , which we visited later on, contains a still greater number. The latter was very interesting, and the custodian, an old Federal soldier, seemed proud of his post and of the good order in which it was kept. He seemed a little alarmed lest, as a result of the change of Government in Washington, there might not be a change in the custodianship of the National Cemetery also. Both he and all who fought through the war were very reticent about entering into particulars, and seemed rather wishful to avoid speaking of the subject. Perhaps they were anxious to let byegones be byegones, and to wish to draw a veil over what must have been a season of dreadful suffering and woe. It

seemed in some cases as if the war-time was a subject too momentous and sacred to be spoken of with a casual acquaintance.

Richmond is now a flourishing city of about 72,000, and its suburb, called *Manchester* , has a population of about 7,000—an increase of about 50 per cent. since I had visited it before in 1871. The improvement in the buildings in the town was very remarkable; the chief street was filled with fine blocks of buildings, and traces of the old tumble-down buildings from the slavery times, doubtless made more dilapidated by the war, had disappeared, and the burnt blocks left by the retreating Confederate troops were not only pulled down but 60 replaced by far better buildings than had ever graced Richmond in its former days. Extensive suburbs, built up with villas within the last few years, were very convincing proofs of the great increase in the material wealth of the city, and were in striking contrast to the demure, respectable red-brick houses in which Lee and Davies and the aristocracy of Virginia formerly resided. The celebrated Tredegar Ironworks are situated here. It may be remembered that they were during the war the chief arsenal of the South.

Tobacco is the great business of the city, and a visit we made to one of the tobacco manufactories, in which the negroes gave us a treat by singing with heart, soul, and wide-open-mouths some plaintive melodies, working with increased energy all the while, was a sight never to be forgotten.

When driving about the suburbs and to the lines round the town we passed the celebrated *Libby Prison* , which, some will remember, was one of the prisons for Federal prisoners during the war. The appearance of the building—an old tobacco warehouse—disposes one to believe the stories told of the horrors the prisoners had to endure from bad accommodation, overcrowding, and bad drainage. The treatment of their prisoners was an undoubted blot on the chivalrous Southerners.

Besides tobacco warehouses there are in Richmond large flour, cotton, and paper mills, and wholesale warehouses of all kinds. The city, from its situation on the James River, is well adapted for trade, being only 124 61 miles from the sea, and it is a centre from which railways diverge to all quarters.

I cannot pass from Richmond without speaking of the Sunday we spent there. We were advised to go to the second Presbyterian Church to hear the Rev. Dr. Hoge, and we were more than rewarded and gratified. A similar congregation could hardly have been found elsewhere. The minister, a thin ascetic man, spoke generally in a low tone, but the bursts of oratory that every now and again came from his lips could not but electrify and entrance an audience, and we could well understand that what we heard on every side was true, viz., that Dr. Hoge was the chief power in Richmond, the friend and adviser of every one in trouble or distress, and the one man *par excellence* to whom all appealed.

It was gratifying to find here in Richmond, as we had found was the case in Chicago, and as we *knew* was the case in New York, that the Presbyterian Church was represented by such able men, and if the Presbyterian Church did not, as is unfortunately the case, retain its hold on the poor and the labouring classes generally, it was eminently the church of the middle classes, and also of a great proportion of the bankers, professional men, and merchants. This subject is an interesting one, and deserves greater attention than it can receive in these few remarks.

Being desirous of seeing American life in as many phases as possible, we went to the chief Coloured Church in Richmond, and, losing our way, asked for direction 62 from two or three little black boys, who, along with a small gang of their playmates, not only showed us the way, but, probably pleased with the “tip” we gave them, accompanied us and formed part of the audience, behaving as well, or rather as badly, as boys might be expected to do here under the same circumstances. The church building and its furnishing would have been thought very good in Manchester, and the small congregation assembled was quiet, well dressed, and respectable. The minister was a gentle and not very fluent

speaker; the music was slow beyond description, and the intensely respectable choir held before them in the music gallery marvellously large hymn-books, preserving the gravest of grave faces. The fact was, as we found out very soon, we had made, for our purpose, a mistake. We ought to have gone to a less pretentious church to hear negroes worship in their true style. With the genteel surroundings of this church the negro character had not fair play.

In writing home from Richmond I see that I say that the weather is perfection, but that there is a sharpness in the air which is very apt to give cold to any one emerging from the overheated hotels and railway cars. The heat to which it is thought necessary to raise the buildings on the approach of winter is incredible. What the heat is when winter really comes I cannot fancy, if it is in proportion to what we felt before winter had really set in! Perhaps it is on this account that the people in the Western States more particularly seem to have a continued cold, causing continued expectoration, preceded 63 generally by very great coughing. The noises sometimes made by our fellow-travellers to “cough it up” were sometimes rather painful and distressing.

But our time is now drawing to a close, and we must hurry on to New York, where we have a few days to spend on business; and, besides, our plan is to see Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia on our way.

Washington, which is 116 miles north of Richmond, we reached in three or four hours. As we travelled by the evening train we saw nothing of the country. The last few years have made a most wonderful change on this city. My previous experience tallied with the often quoted description given of it, viz., that it was a city of *magnificent distances* . The splendid public buildings are there, as fine as ever, and still finer buildings have been added to them; but the intervening space, which, from contrast, gave point to the sneer, we now found filled up with fine buildings, and streets of splendid dwelling-houses showed that the city was becoming the home of a large and wealthy population. From what we could learn, there are many signs of it becoming not only, as at present, the seat of Government,

but the head-quarters of the literature and the influence of America. The streets, which are about double ordinary width, and which, on that account, present increased difficulties in the way of paving, we found in good order and immensely improved from previous experience.

Our next stopping-place was Baltimore, some forty miles from Washington and ninety-seven from Philadelphia, 64 and 184 from New York, where we hoped to be in two days more. Baltimore has a most commanding position from its proximity to the Atlantic and its situation on Chesapeake Bay. Its commanding position, as regards water communication, is unsurpassed, and this and the railway systems that diverge from it must ensure it a great future. The number of fine buildings in the city is very great, but Baltimore is not by any means a show-place, and the streets seemed to us after Chicago and St. Louis, and other great towns, rather narrow and not well adapted to show off the buildings to advantage. There is something to suggest oysters at every turn in Baltimore, and the trade of “oyster packer” seemed as common there, judging by the street-signs, as is that of “grey calicoes” in Manchester.

Philadelphia was no exception to other American towns visited. Whilst retaining the substantial look for which it has long been famous, it has made wonderful strides within the last few years in the architecture of its banks and semi-public buildings; whilst in its State buildings—town hall, post-office, and such like—the Philadelphians have seemed determined to surpass New York and every city in America. The shops we found to be on a magnificent scale, second only to the finest in New York, and in one enormous magazine which we visited—one of the wonders of Philadelphia—we found all the departments communicating with a central elevated open counting-house, to which all invoices with cash were sent through pneumatic tubes, and from thence 65 returned receipted in the same way, along with the necessary change.

Philadelphia can hardly be passed without a reference to the Girard College, founded by a native of France, who had made his fortune in Philadelphia, and whose original legacy,

owing to the increased value in property, is now of great importance. From the report of the institution, which was given to us by one of the trustees, a brother of a former well-known Manchester merchant, I make out that the present revenue of the Girard Trust is $976,961, or about £200,000 per annum. One-half of this sum is derived from interest and rentals, and the other half from collieries; but, from the nature of the investments generally, a considerable prospective increase in income may be counted on. The report says that the directors intend to increase the number of beneficiaries as funds will admit of it. Mr. Girard at first set aside five acres for college purposes, naming three hundred as the minimum number of orphans he expected to accommodate. By a codicil he allotted about forty acres more for this purpose, so that the trustees in their report for the year 1883 say that the enlargement of the charity is " *only a question of arithmetic* ."

Mr. Girard must have been a very singular man—plain in his domestic habits and tastes, as his furniture and belongings, reverentially preserved in a room in the college, evidently demonstrate. He must have been a methodical and thinking man, his exact will providing that the orphans "shall be instructed in reading, writing, F 66 grammar, arithmetic, geography, navigation, surveying, practical mathematics, astronomy, chemical and experimental philosophy, the French and Spanish languages, with such other learning as their capacities may merit." His will also expresses the desire that the orphans "shall be taught facts and things rather than words and signs." The following extract from the will of Stephen Girard is often spoken of and is still rigidly put into practice at the porter's lodge:—

Extract from the Will of Stephen Girard.

There are, however, some restrictions which I consider it my duty to prescribe, and to be, amongst others, conditions on which my bequest for said College is made, and to be enjoyed, namely, * * * * * * *Secondly* , I enjoin and require that no *ecclesiastic, missionary, or minister of any sect whatsoever, shall ever hold or exercise any station or duly whatever in the said College; nor shall any such person ever be admitted for any purpose, or as a visitor, within the premises appropriated to the purposes of the said College:* —In making

this restriction, I do not mean to cast any reflection upon any sect or person whatsoever; but, as there is such a multitude of sects, and such a diversity of opinion amongst them, I desire to keep the tender minds of the orphans, who are to derive advantage from this bequest, free from the excitement which clashing doctrines and sectarian controversy are so apt to produce; my desire is, that all the instructors and teachers in the College shall take pains to instil into the minds of the scholars *the purest principles of morality* , so that, on their entrance into active life, they may, *from inclination and habit* , evince *benevolence towards their fellow-creatures* , and *a love of truth, sobriety, and industry* , adopting at the same time such religious tenets as their matured reason may enable them to prefer.

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Girard is said to have been really a religiously disposed man, but his strong feelings on sectarian teaching, whether Roman Catholic or the opposite extreme, is very evidently shown in the foregoing extract. Our friend, a well-known banker—himself, as I have said, one of the trustees—was in the habit of preaching, lecturing, admonishing, encouraging, and amusing the children in every way the English language allows of, and as long as he and others such remain, lessons of goodness and virtue and the foundations of true religion will be some way or other inculcated in the minds of the pupils.

A well-known and obtrusive atheist not long since visited the college with a formal introduction. He was attired in black, and he also wore, as was his custom, a white neck-tie. The porter at that the lodge at once that he was a minister, and said, “Sir, I regret I cannot admit you.” “Why?” said the visitor. “Because you are a minister,” said the porter. The language that followed ensured the visitor's immediate admittance. The porter remarked that the visitor had the pass-word quite at his tongue's end.

From Philadelphia to New York the run of eighty-five miles was made with as great rapidity and comfort as on any English railway, and we shortly found ourselves back again in our old quarters in the Fifth Avenue Hotel. The city had calmed down somewhat during our absence; indeed, the election excitement could hardly have been said to have begun when

we left, and now, on our return to the hotel which had been the Republican headquarters. 68 during the Presidential contest, we found that the leaders of that party had accepted the situation, and, acknowledging their defeat, had disappeared into private life. In many ways we were well away from New York during the first few days following the election, because on the correct or incorrect return from New York State depended the Presidential election —whether Cleveland the Democrat or Blaine the Republican was to direct the destinies of the United States for the next four years. The excitement which, as we had witnessed, was great throughout the country was greater still in the State of New York, and intensified in the city itself, and our hotel must have for a time been given over entirely to politics to the neglect of mere travellers for pleasure such as ourselves.

On the Sunday previous to our return, a well-known preacher in New York, Dr. Talmage, preached a sermon on the election, which may be quoted as a specimen of the feelings engendered by the election:—“Law and order are now supreme. All is quiet now along the Hudson, Ohio, Merrimac, and Alabama. Thank God, the election is over. The long scroll of abuse, malediction, billings-gate, denunciation, menace, malignity, savagery, persecution, revenge, venom, virulence, diabolism, betrayal, intimidation, truculency, vituperation, disparagement, calumny, scurrility, invective, obloquy, hypercriticism, sneer, satire, censure, abomination, and villainy, is rolled up not to be opened for four years.” The election ended, as all know, in the return of Cleveland the 69 Democrat, which was accepted in the South, particularly, as a glorious victory. The Southern papers wrote effusively that the reign of the carpet-baggers was over; the Whites of the South were again to raise their heads and rule as of old. They wrote that the negro vote was overturned and the country rescued from African barbarism; that the proud Anglo-Saxon race again took their proper position in the country they had redeemed from the wilderness. Certainly the result of the election is a great reversal of American politics as they have existed for twenty-four years; the Republican party which has been turned out is the party which fought for and maintained the Union, abolished slavery, maintained the national honour as regards specie payment of the national debt, and which, as far as it has

been able, has tried to remain true to the gold standard of currency. It remains to be seen whether the Democratic party in power will alter the policy of their predecessors, to which at one time or another they have been opposed. Most likely there will be no modification excepting in the silver question, and some very slight alteration in the restrictive tariff that now prevails. Any idea of a free-trade policy being actively advocated by the new Administration may, in my opinion, be dismissed at once as a vain illusion.

We spent the few remaining days previous to our sailing for home in going about the city and making ourselves acquainted with its geography, its surroundings, and general economy. We were, among other places, F2 70 taken by friends to see the arrangements in connection with the fire-brigades. These have been often and very fully described, and I will not say much about them. As soon as a fire is discovered in New York, telegraphic notice is at once sent to the head office from one of the fire-alarms which are to be found every here and there in the streets. The head office at once wires to the nearest station, giving the address; the same electric signal looses the horses from their stalls, which, rushing to the pole of the engine, are instantaneously and mechanically harnessed; the driver drops into his seat through a trap-door in the ceiling, and the men, ready dressed, sliding down brass poles from their barracks above, are apparently instantaneously at their post. The whole affair is a matter of six or seven seconds, and in about ten seconds the engine is in full career, with steam being got up so quickly that the engine is ready for work when it arrives at the scene of the fire.

The public buildings in New York are very fine, but perhaps not as striking as they are in Chicago and Philadelphia, considering the relative importance and extent of the city. New York has several very distinct aspects. From the Battery, the first point seen going up the harbour, the streets for a considerable distance put one in mind of those of London —they are irregular and often narrow; and magnificent buildings are to be met with which are lost in a great measure from want of a foreground to show them off. Some of the finest buildings have been erected by insurance companies, partly as a 71 safe investment for their reserves, and partly as an advertisement. We were taken to the top of one of

these buildings by a hoist; the elevation is the highest in New York, and from the roof we got a magnificent view of the harbour, the Hudson River to the West, and the East River between New York and Long Island. Brooklyn, joined to New York by the East River, and which bears the relation of Birkenhead to Liverpool, was almost at our feet, whilst New York stretched out away to the North till it was lost in the dim distance.

I may mention here that elevators in America are used to an extent of which we have no idea here, and the result is that the upper stories, the sixth, seventh, or eighth floors of their enormous piles of buildings, are for office purposes as available as are the first or second here; in fact, the better air and light obtainable at the top are an attraction. We were told by a gentleman who had lately built a very large pile of offices, that he let the top flat first of all at two-thirds of the rental he afterwards obtained for the first floor. The hoists go at a good speed, and they are, besides, numerous—in fact, so numerous in a large building that they may be said to be continuous, and no waiting is necessary.

After leaving the old and irregularly built region of New York, which includes Wall Street, the insurance offices, and many of the banks, a middle zone of commerce is reached —the region of “dry goods” merchants and importers generally. Afterwards shops and residences get the upper hand, and four miles from the Battery and 72 from thence onwards to the Central Park, in Broadway, Fifth Avenue, and the streets adjoining, there may be seen some of the finest residences in the world; many of them are the very picture of solid comfort and elegance, and as you approach the Central Park, there are to be seen the habitations of the Vanderbilts and other millionaires of America.

The street architecture of New York is very good and characteristic; the “brown stone” houses, as they are called, have a very solid appearance, and the brick-work, when brick is used, is strikingly good as regards material and workmanship.

The Produce Exchange, the Central Park, Brooklyn, Jersey City, and the city of New York generally must be familiar to all who read the newspapers. Since my previous visit, the

greatest change, after the Elevated Railway already described, was the bridge across the East River, by which Brooklyn is joined to New York. This bridge was a necessity, owing to the great development of the traffic between the two cities. The cost, said to have been £3,000,000, leads one to expect a great deal, and no one can examine it carefully and be disappointed. The bridge is eighty-five feet wide, and has ample accommodation for foot passengers, double roads for vehicles, and double lines of rail for the railway. We crossed by the latter and returned on foot, looking over on to the busy river, crowded with shipping and steamers of all kinds, from an elevation of 135 feet above high-water mark.

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This discursive description, like the trip itself, must have an end. It has been spun out more than I intended when I began to write, but the great difficulty I have had has been the difficulty of compressing my remarks, and, after all, I feel very much as if I had left untold the things I ought to have told. Our party of four got on most happily and harmoniously, and the weather was almost perfect from the day we landed till the day we left. We saw the country under very favourable auspices. Every one told us that business was bad and at a stand-still, owing to the election. Perhaps the absence of business was comparative and figurative, as when the Londoners say that there is no one in town, when to a stranger the streets are crowded beyond belief. If business was standing, as I fear it was from other causes besides the election, we got a better view of the people and saw their general good conduct under exciting circumstances. We met with great kindness and hospitality, and had we had time we could have had far more shown us in many directions. We left the United States more impressed than ever with the magnitude of the country and its glorious future.

We began our journey fully disposed to be pleased, and most certainly we were not disappointed. We were most anxious to learn and to be amused. A hypercritical or sneering spirit was foreign to our instincts, but at the same time we were always anxious to catch anything that was peculiarly national or, in our opinion, “odd.” We were particularly

struck with the quaint similes 74 employed by writers and speakers, and also by the Biblical phrases which now and again seemed to be used quite unconsciously.

A few days before the election, the Rev. Mr. Beecher said in one of his speeches, “All the guano of Peru could not raise Blaine above party feeling” Speaking of the Prohibitionist candidate—St. John—one newspaper editor wrote, “St. John in Patmos is more likely to succeed than he.” A fellow-guest in our hotel was overheard to say about an opponent in the insurance business, “He knows no more about life insurance than Balaam's ass knew of the Hebrew grammar.” Giving a description of eating-houses and hotels in the suburbs of London, a newspaper correspondent wrote, whilst we were in New York, “It is as easy to obtain cooked food in St. John's Wood as it would be to raise oysters on the pyramid of Cheops.” To finish these examples of American similes, the *Tribune* , a day or so before we left, said that there was as much need for an American minister in Turkey as there was for the President to wear a second pair of trousers.

The Irish in America are well-known to us all from the speeches and deeds of themselves and their sympathizers here. They are as much an element of trouble in America as they are here, and the corruption that attends their possession of power in the great cities is a great cause for anxiety to honest Americans. The German and Scandinavian element is a great antidote to their influence in the West, and probably their influence in the next twenty 75 years may be found to have been greatly swamped thereby. One very remarkable development in the emigration of late years is in the number of Jews flocking to America; they are generally of German or Polish origin; they are well-behaved and good citizens, and in the towns in the middle and Southern States they have got a surprising hold of the small shop-keeping and retailing business. With such an influx of different nationalities into the States it is difficult to forecast what the next generation or so will be; the wonder is that the old Puritan Fathers have given an impress to the national character which has survived in many ways even more markedly than it has done in our own country itself.

When travelling from New York to the West we found a state of things as regards the purchase of railway tickets which was contrary to our previous experience in any country, and which it is to be hoped is only temporary. The different railways were competing against each other for custom, and fares were being reduced from day to day. Notices of the reduction were posted at the different offices up and down the towns, but the rates quoted were not always adhered to, and in a general way it might be said that no reasonable offer was refused. I do not think we were properly up to bargaining, so novel was the state of matters, but we certainly did get considerable abatements at times by threatening to go to the next office if our offer was not accepted. One of the New York papers, describing the state of affairs in this 76 respect, said that so many of the unemployed there were taking tickets, that if the “war of rates” lasted for a year the West would be filled up.

We returned home by the renowned Cunard steamer “Umbria”—the finest steamer ever sent to sea, and the inaugurator of a new epoch in Transatlantic travel. When we went on board, on a dark November night, the spacious saloons and the berths, lighted up by the electric light, presented a scene never to be forgotten, and I could not help contrasting it with my remembrance of the historic “Great Western” steamer by which I had crossed the Atlantic some thirty years previously. The Great Western—the first steamer that crossed the Atlantic—was, at the time I speak of, near the close of her career; but she was, all things considered, as nearly perfect as a ship could be in everything excepting size and speed. Her designer, the great Brunel, had he been a shipbuilder to-day, would have had, perhaps, less to learn than any survivor of the scientific men of his day. He was in shipbuilding, as in many other respects, a long way ahead of his day and generation.

I would have gladly described our journey homewards, but it had such a pic-nic character that I cannot think of chronicling it. The weather was good—for the Atlantic; the company was perfect; we were satisfied with our trip; and had only one wish, which was soon gratified, the wish to be again— At Home .

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